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TIBET INSIGHT JANUARY 1-23, 2024

TAR NEWS

TAR Party Committee Convenes Symposium of all Religious Representatives in the TAR January 6, 2023

On January 5, TAR Party Secretary Wang Junzheng attended a meeting for representatives of Buddhist communities held in Lhasa. He emphasised the need to implement the Party's strategy for governing Tibet and its religious work policy. Wang Junzheng urged them to adapt Tibetan Buddhism to socialism with Chinese characteristics. In his speech, the TAR Party Secretary Wang Junzheng also pointed out that “the current Tibet presents a scene of vibrant and prosperous development, with political stability, social harmony, economic growth, ethnic unity, religious harmony, solidified border defense, and the people are leading a happy life.” He added “this achievement is the result of the wise leadership of the Party Central Committee with Xi Jinping at its core and the diligent efforts of cadres, masses of all ethnic groups, and religious figures across the region.” He emphasized the need to “consolidate the national consciousness, study the history of Tibet and its relationship with the country (China) strengthen the learning of the national (Chinese) language, promote exchanges among various ethnic groups, and continuously enhance the five identifications.

The symposium highlighted the achievements in education and training of religious representatives, emphasizing the importance of adhering to Xi Jinping's Thought and implementing directives for long-term peace and high-quality development in Tibet. Wang Junzheng called for increased efforts in promoting the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, stressing its significance for adapting to contemporary Chinese society. Representatives were also urged to strengthen Party leadership, maintain social stability, and actively contribute to the construction of a new socialist Tibet. Yan Jinhai, Chairman of the TAR People's Government presided over the symposium and emphasised the Party's commitment to religious

work and called for adherence to sinicise Buddhism and adhere to law-based management of religious affairs.

(Comment: The Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism seeks to assimilate Tibetan Buddhism into Chinese cultural and political norms, posing a threat to the unique cultural and religious identity of Tibetan Buddhism. For Tibetans, Buddhist practices are an intrinsic part of their national identity and as such, they pose a great challenge to the legitimacy of China's rule in Tibet. China uses different methods including coercive measures to attract monks, nuns and religious figures towards the party and integrate them into the political framework.)

2nd Session of the 12th TAR PPCC held in Lhasa

January 08, 2023

On January 7, the second plenary session of the 12th TAR People's Consultative Conference (PPCC) was held. Wang Junzheng, Lobsang Gyaltzen, Yan Jinhai, Chen Yongqi, Liu Jiang, Wang Haizhou, Lai Jiao, Ren Wei, Xiao Youcai, Dawa Tsering, Lie Qu and others attended.

The highlights of the Work Report of the 12th TAR PPCC is appended.

(Comment: A number of China's provinces have held plenary sessions of the provincial PPCCs since mid-January 2024.)

2nd Session of the 12th TAR People's Congress Starts in Lhasa

January 07, 2023

The 2nd Session of the 12th TAR People's Congress also commenced in Lhasa on January 7, 2023. Representatives from across the TAR gathered. The session included group deliberations on the government work report, plan report, and draft budget report.

TAR leaders including Wang Junzheng, Lobsang Gyaltzen, Yan Jinhai, Chen Yongqi, Liu Jiang and others attended the session. Yan Jinhai, Chairman of the TAR People's Government presented the work report of 2023 and work plans for 2024.

The highlights of the Work Report of the 12th TAR PPCC is appended.

TAR's Investment in Border Courts and claims to have accepted 86,260 border-related cases in the entire TAR

January 8, 2023

At a press conference in Lhasa, to discuss the effectiveness and typical cases of the "four creations" and "four in the forefront" propaganda campaign of the TAR Court, Zhao Yuyan, Deputy Secretary of the party group and Executive Vice President of the Higher People's Court of the TAR emphasized the court's duty to "protect the sacred land, build a happy home, and ensure the solid defence of the national security barrier." He said that since the beginning of the year, the courts in the TAR have led in serving the establishment of the national demonstration zone for consolidating the border and enriching the people, innovating border-related judicial measures, completing 7,124 cases in 21 border county courts, and investing 71.93 million yuan to strengthen the infrastructure of border courts. Over the past year, the courts, particularly border courts, played a significant role in serving the border, handling contradictions, and disputes, cracking down on cross-border crimes, and contributing to the establishment of a national demonstration area for consolidating the border and enriching the people. It was disclosed at the press conference that the Higher People's Court of the TAR had disclosed that 2,266 criminal cases, a 9.22% year-on-year increase, related to serving the creation of model areas for national unity and progress, were dealt with.

Also, that the courts in the TAR had accepted 86,260 cases, a 31.75% year-on-year increase, with a 91.68% completion rate within the trial limit in 2023.

The press conference also highlighted the successful conclusion of 42 criminal cases of environmental resources, resulting in fines exceeding 2.1 million yuan. Furthermore, 141 civil trials involving the development and utilization of natural resources contributed to the standardized market trading behaviour of these resources. The Higher People's Court of the TAR established a leading group for the north-south mountain greening project in Lhasa, handling 190 trials and execution cases and concluding 182 cases.

Wang Junzheng met Chen Zhongyue, Chairman of China Unicom Group

January 14, 2024

Wang Junzheng, Party Secretary of the TAR met Chen Zhongyue, Chairman of China Unicom Group in Lhasa and praised the Unicorn Group's "dedication to implementing the decisions and arrangements of the CCP Central Committee and its active participation in Tibet's economic and social development", which he said has contributed to the long-term stability and high-quality development of the region.

Wang Junzheng highlighted that Tibet is currently focused on implementing Xi Jinping's "important instructions and the Party's strategy for governing Tibet in the new era", with an emphasis on stability, development, ecology, and border consolidation. Wang Junzheng also mentioned the potential for cooperation between China Unicom Group, with its strength and leading technology, and Tibet, with its regional and resource advantages. He expressed the hope that the China Unicom Group would continue to support Tibet's development, particularly in the construction of Digital Tibet, leveraging its talents, technology, and funds to strengthen digital information infrastructure and advance the TAR's digital informationization. Additionally, Wang Junzheng called for the support of emerging industries in Tibet, the empowerment of big data, and advancements in data products and services to elevate the level of scientific and technological applications.

Wang Junzheng additionally urged increased assistance to Tibet, including the deployment of outstanding talents in science, technology, and emerging industries to work in Tibet. He concluded with a call to jointly promote the implementation and completion of cooperation projects while consolidating achievements and achieving tangible results in various collaborative efforts.

In his speech Chen Zhongyue said that China Unicom Group will "thoroughly implement the decisions and arrangements" of Xi Jinping and the CCP Central Committee, actively integrate into the overall economic and social development of Tibet, highlight technological innovation and application, coordinate the progress of cooperative project construction, continue to leverage its strengths, and make new and greater contributions to the comprehensive construction of a socialist modernized new Tibet.

Over 700 national power grid remote border connections

January 15, 2024

The Global Times claimed that China has extended its national power grid connections to remote outposts in an effort to bolster its border defense capabilities. This expansion aims to improve living conditions and infrastructure for troops stationed in border areas, ultimately contributing to their combat readiness. By the end of 2023, over 700 remote outposts of border defense companies had been successfully linked to the national power grid, forming an energy support system primarily reliant on electricity, supported by fuel, solar, and wind energy. The development is expected to increase the security and reliability of power supply to military equipment, improve energy consumption efficiency, and elevate border management and control capabilities while fostering cleaner and environment-friendly energy use. The article commended the dedication of soldiers stationed in snowy mountainous regions and highlighted the logistical support provided by the military in such challenging environments.

TAR People's Government holds key project deployment and promotion meeting

January 17, 2024

On January 17, 2024, a key project deployment and promotion meeting for the first quarter of the year took place in Lhasa. Attending the meeting on behalf of Chairman Yan Jinhai, Chen Yongqi, Deputy Secretary of the TAR Party Committee and Executive Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government, delivered a speech. Chen Yongqi signed a letter of responsibility for the key tasks and division of labor in the 2024 Work Report with concerned departments and prefecture-level cities.

Zhang Hongbo, Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government and Head of the TAR Public Security Bureau chaired the meeting, which was also attended by the Vice Chairmen of TAR People's Government, Gyare Lobsang Tenzin, Wang Yong, Wei Xiuchang, Xu Zhitao, Denba, and Tsering Phuntsog.

Chen Yongqi emphasized the critical nature of the current year for implementing the "14th Five-Year Plan" and stressed the need for all departments and localities to accurately comprehend the economic climate of the year to achieve new and greater successes. He said this would involve implementing a new development model, concentrating on the "four major

events" and the "four creations," and excelling in all economic activities. He also highlighted the importance of key projects and called for the steadfast implementation of various measures with determination and extraordinary achievements, along with the full execution of the action plans for key projects in the first quarter.

27 companies in Lhasa High-tech Zone acknowledged as “national high-tech enterprises”

January 20, 2024

The office of the National High-tech Recognition Management Leading Group has listed 27 high-tech enterprises, including Tibet Yaojing Information Technology Co., Ltd., and recognized them as national high-tech enterprises in the Lhasa High-tech Zone. This was acclaimed as signifying significant progress in technological innovation and advancement in the region. The success rate of high-tech enterprise certification applications in 2023 stands at 71%, with 16 companies being approved and 11 applying for recognition. The Lhasa High-tech Zone plans to establish a scientific and technological innovation institution, build a service platform, explore innovative enterprises, and enhance the registration of technology-based small and medium-sized enterprises.

LHOKA NEWS

The first session of the Mainling People’s Congress concludes

January 07, 2024

Since upgrading from a county to a city in April 2023, Mainling (Ch:Milin) held its first People’s Congress on January 5. 128 delegates attended including Yan Shiqin, Executive Chairman of Milin People’s Congress, and members, Phadruk, Liu Liping, Nima Tsering, Wang Bin, Chen Dong, He Ping, Sun Chengchun, and Dekyi Dolkar. Phadruk, the Executive Chairman of the Milin People’s Congress, presided over the meeting. Its agenda included the election of Directors and Deputy Directors of the Standing Committee of the Municipal People's Congress, as well as members of various committees and departments. The Congress voted on Milin’s economic and social development plans, financial budgets, and reviewed several work reports.

Sun Chengchun, the new Deputy Director of the Standing Committee of the Municipal People's Congress, led an oath-taking ceremony for newly elected officials.

Phadruk, in his speech, stressed the importance of “upholding ideological principles, following the leadership's guidance, and contributing to the implementation of key decisions.” He urged representatives to focus on promoting economic and social development, aligning their work with Milin’s development goals, and seizing opportunities.

Lhoka holds the 7th ‘Top Ten People who moved Lhoka’ Award Function

January 09, 2024

Lhoka Municipal Party Committee held the 7th “Top Ten People who moved Lhoka” award function, to recognize individuals who made contributions to Lhoka. Among the awardees were Phuntsok Tsering who had “acted bravely to save people from glaciers,” Ma Dan, a Tibet-Aid Programme Teacher who “teaching the children of the plateau,” Sonam Choephel, a lone border guard at Jerob, and Tsering Dhondup another border guard.

Feedback Meeting from the 5th round of Inspections held in Gongga County

January 09, 2024

A meeting to discuss the fifth round of inspections in Gongga county of Lhoka (Ch: Shannan) was held in the county on January 9. During the meeting, it was emphasized that there is a need to enhance the political position and deeply understand the significance of the inspections. The Inspecting Team was told to conscientiously study and implement Xi Jinping's crucial statements regarding inspection work, along with the new directives and requirements from the CCP Central Committee, TAR Party Committee, Lhoka Municipal Party Committee, and the Gonggar County Party Committee. There was an emphasis on approaching inspection and rectification work with the courage to introspect, base actions on facts, and implement concrete measures to rectify issues where necessary. The meeting stressed the importance of bringing the rectification of feedback problems in a robust and orderly manner.

The Inspecting Team of Officials were told to integrate inspection and rectification into their daily work, emphasizing the strengthening of organizational leadership. The approach should be used to address both, symptoms and root causes of an issue, and the Inspection Team were

further told to facilitate reform, and conduct rectifications through patrol activities and strict social governance measures.

Chairman of TAR People’s Congress participates in Lhoka Delegation to the two sessions in Lhasa

January 09, 2024

The Chairman of the TAR People’s Congress Lobsang Gyaltzen participated and interacted with the Lhoka (Ch:Shannan) delegation at the two sessions held in Lhasa. The highlights of the interaction were:

- The need to reach target tasks and push for greater achievements
- Commended the TAR People’s Government work report for its “comprehensive analysis and clear work arrangements”
- He attributed Tibet’s successes to the “strong leadership of Xi Jinping and the unity and struggle of the cadres and people”
- Emphasized the critical nature of the current year, which he said marks the 75th anniversary of the People's Republic of China and a key period for the 14th Five-Year Plan and Chinese-style modernization. And he stressed the need to defend the "two establishments" and achieve the "two maintenances”
- He called for taking ‘Xi Jinping's instructions on Tibet work and the Party's strategy for governing Tibet in the new era as the outline and soul of the Party’s work in Tibet’
- He emphasised the importance of focusing on the "four major events" and "four creations," advocating for a change in work style, close attention to implementation. He urged the delegates to immerse themselves in grassroots governance efforts
- On ideological foundations, he stressed the importance of fostering and forging the communal consciousness of the Chinese nation (Chinese nationalism)
- Finally, he encouraged the delegates to continue focusing on the central goals, taking cognizance of overall work and making contributions for the “construction of a united, rich, civilized, harmonious, and beautiful socialist modern Tibet.”

The female Head of the Lhoba Community and Representative to the two sessions says Metok Highway brought “great changes and a sense of hope”

January 11, 2024

Pelmo Chodon, the female head of the Damu Lhoba tribe of Metok (Ch:Motuo) county of Nyingtri (Ch: Linzhi) and representative to the two sessions (TAR People’s Congress and TAR People’s Political Consultative Conference held in Lhasa), told reporters that since the opening of the Tramo (Ch:Zhamu) Highway in 2013, Metok County had undergone substantial changes. Referred to as the ‘secret land of lotus’ (Pemako), Metok County is located in the Southeast of Tibet and borders India’s Pemako in the lower part of Arunachal Pradesh.

Chodon said that the opening of the highway, part of the G559 (National) Highway with a total length of 117 kilometres brought an end to Metok’s historical isolation as the "island of the plateau" also enabling the village to relocate to a safer area in 2018. With the highway's opening, Metok residents diversified their occupations, and engaged in tea cultivation, transportation, business ventures, and hospitality.

She told the reporters that she had submitted a proposal during the Two Sessions to tackle “the insufficient emergency rescue capacity” in Metok county.

(Comment: Pelmo Chodon had evolved from a college graduate to a teacher, grassroots civil servant, and township head, holding multiple positions, including becoming a representative at the county and township levels and a member of the TAR People’s Political Consultative Conference (PPCC). She plays a pivotal role in various aspects of local governance.)

Chinese language training for grassroots cadres in Sangri County

January 20, 2024

The village-based work team of Daga Village, Rong Township, in Sangri County of Lhoka (Ch:Shannan) has introduced “innovative methods” to conduct comprehensive “national common language” or Chinese language teaching activities to fully engage village cadres, farmers, and party members in learning and utilizing Chinese language thereby fostering a “stronger sense of community for the Chinese nation.”

Some of the methods the village-based work team has utilized are the New Era Civilization Practice Station and incorporated textbooks such as "Chinese and Tibetan Daily Language Learning Reader" and "Chinese and Tibetan Language." They have employed methods such as "word-for-word explanations, situational dialogues, text dictation," to enhance the village cadres' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing Chinese. Additionally, the team is focusing on intensive training for village cadres who have a weak foundation to improve their proficiency in reading and writing. The goal is for each village cadre to be capable of reading and writing their name and position in the “national common language”, achieved through personalized assistance and teaching.

In the next phase, the village-based work team will continue to assist grassroots cadres in learning the Chinese language to enable them to gain a more accurate understanding of the principles and policies of the party and the country (China), thus laying a “solid foundation for promoting national unity and strengthening grassroots organizational construction.”

The Party Branch of the United Front Work Department of the Lhoka Municipal Party Committee held the 2023 Theme Education Special Organization Life Meeting
January 22, 2024

The United Front Work Department of Lhoka's Party Branch organized a special meeting to discuss the theme education in 2023 and conducted an evaluation of party members. The meeting highlighted the importance of prioritizing party building work, effectively educating and supervising party members, and integrating party building with the united front work to achieve high standards and to conduct activities promoting education and development in religious, ethnic, and private enterprise circles. Members were urged to focus on the TAR Party Committee’s goals, elevate ideology, and align with Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. The meeting also stressed the significance of political character, discipline, and upholding established positions.

NGARI NEWS

“Striving to Construct the "Western Pearl" of the Snow Plateau”

An Interview with Tenpa Wangchuk, Deputy to the TAR People’s Congress Session, Deputy Secretary of the Ngari Municipal Party Committee and Commissioner of Ngari Administrative Commission

In an interview to Reporters, Tenpa Wangchuk, Deputy to the TAR People’s Congress Session, Deputy Secretary of the Ngari Municipal Party Committee and Commissioner of Ngari Administrative Commission, said that Ngari (Ch:Ali) focussed on the ‘Four Major Events’ and ‘Four Creations’ and strived to build Ngari ‘the Western Pearl of the Snowy Plateau’ with “strong support from the TAR Party Committee and TAR People’s Government”, with support from the 'two provinces and three enterprises' and state-designated ministries and commissions. He added that Ngari had witnessed a 13% increase in GDP, a 35.64% rise in fixed asset investment, a 30.1% growth in general public budget revenue, and 8% and 13% year-on-year increases in per capita disposable income for urban and rural residents, respectively. Ngari’s growth rates, he said, positions it at the forefront in the whole of the TAR.

Tenpa Wangchuk added that in 2023, Ngari had focussed largely on national security, and became a model area for national unity and progress and that Ngari allocated funds to enhance grass-roots governance, implemented a "grid management + digital governance" model, and achieved visible improvements in conflict resolution mechanisms, addressing various conflicts and disputes. He also emphasized the implementation of the "five benefits" and "three consciousness" propaganda campaigns and the promotion of national unity through various projects and actions in Ngari in 2023. To bolster economic development, he said, Ngari had focussed on major projects, witnessing great progress in the Burang airport, a new highway between Ngari Gunsa airport to Sengge-Khabab/Indus River (Ch: Shiquanhe), Rebugarin Reservoir, Ngari Irrigation and Urbanization. Tenpa Wangchuk also said that Ngari had reached milestones in the cashmere industry, cultural tourism, green industry, and digital economy. He said that Ngari had intensified ecological protection, achieving milestones in afforestation, controlling sandy land, and designating key areas as national parks in 2023. Ngari also implemented river and lake chief systems.

In his concluding remarks Tenpa Wangchuk said Ngari is committed to border consolidation and development, reiterated Xi Jinping’s strategic quote “To govern the country, it is important to govern and securitised the borders” and enumerated initiatives such as the "border construction improvement action", which aims to enhance economic, social, and border defense aspects, contributing to border security and regional prosperity.

NYINGTRI NEWS

Nyingtri Border Management Detachment Conducts Series of Activities to Celebrate the Fourth Chinese People's Police Day

January 11, 2024

The Nyingtri Border Management Detachment conducted a series of activities to celebrate the Fourth Chinese People's Police Day (January 10). The activities were aimed at enhancing professional pride and unity among the police officers, as well as engaging with the public and reinforcing their commitment to border security and management. To foster a sense of dedication, loyalty, and professionalism among the officers, the officers participated in the oath ceremony with emphasis to “uphold the honor and ideals associated with police service.” One of the activities, the “Open Day at the Police Camp” event was carried out to “bridge the gap between the police force and the public, especially by engaging elementary school students.” This event showcased the achievements of the border police to instil “admiration and respect for the profession in the younger generation, potentially fostering a sense of identification with the police profession.”

Other activities like “Revisiting Training Content, Singing Police Songs, and Forging the Spirit”, were also carried out to stress the importance of ongoing training and ideological reinforcement, with a focus on aligning the officers with the political demands associated with their role thereby integrating their political and ideological education, shaping the officers' commitment to border security and the jurisdiction's stability. “Patrolling in the Snow to Safeguard the Border” was also conducted to reflect the physical and emotional dedication of the officers, as they venture into challenging conditions to reaffirm their commitment to safeguarding the border.

Metok County Deepens Technological Cooperation with The Fujian Academy of Agricultural Science

January 12, 2024

Metok County reportedly has strengthened technological cooperation with the Fujian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, implementing a collaborative innovation technology support model between the county and the academy. With support from the Fujian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, the precise introduction of Fujian white-fleshed loquat (almond loquat a type of fruit with an outer white or cream-coloured flesh) varieties and technological resources has been achieved.

Subsequently, 11 technical service agreements were signed with six research institutes, covering variety breeding, field management, and comprehensive utilization, contributing to the high-quality development of the white-fleshed loquat industry in Nyingtri. Metok county, in collaboration with the team of academician Yu Jingquan from Zhejiang University, has established the first new energy-intelligent loquat cultivation technology model. The county introduced Fujian Weing Digital Technology Co., Ltd. to establish the country's first digital fruit industry (loquat) platform and set up the first national wild loquat observation scientific research station substation in Nyingtri. The research discovered an ancient tree community of the elliptical loquat within the loquat genus, enriching the national loquat planting gene bank. Led by Chief Expert Zheng Shaoquan from the Fujian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, a professional team has conducted high grafting and replaced 11,000 loquat trees in 24 villages in six townships of Nyingtri, achieving a good variety conversion rate of over 95%.

From 2021 to 2023, reportedly with support of the Fujian Academy of Agricultural Sciences' technological assistance, Nyingtri has become the area with the highest good variety conversion rate for county-level loquat planting in the country. The white-fleshed loquat industry in Nyingtri has been continuously upgraded, with a planting area reaching 4,000 acres and a total investment of over 30 million yuan.

The Rural Book House in Mainling city for dissemination of party propaganda

January 18, 2024

The Shiga Village Farmhouse in Mainling city of Nyingtri claims 68 rural bookstores and 5 temple bookstores, each of which accommodates 3,000-5,000 books. These are being actively

utilized for the dissemination of party propaganda, ideology, and cultural activities. Mainling City Party Committee stated that through initiatives such as World Book Day and national language training, efforts are being made to promote reading habits and learning among farmers and nomads and ensure that the rural bookstores become lively centers for promoting cultural and scientific knowledge, serving as vital hubs for the local community.

Chairman of TAR People's Congress inspects Nyingtri

January 22, 2023

Chairman of TAR People's Congress, Lobsang Gyaltzen conducted a week-long inspection in Nyingtri (Ch:Linzi) from January 13-20, 2024. During the inspection, Lobsang Gyaltzen met grassroot party cadres, frontline officials and construction workers in Kongpo Gyamda, Bayi (Tib:Drayibchu), Pomé, Metok and Mainling. While meeting party cadres and officials, he emphasised the need to “systematically study, profoundly comprehend, and fully implement Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.” This, he said, includes implementing Xi Jinping's important instructions for Tibet and the Party's strategy for governing Tibet in the new era, focusing closely on the "four major issues", and striving to promote the construction of a “new socialist Tibet through China's modernization path.”

Lobsang Gyaltzen visited China's Communal Consciousness Special Exhibition, listened to explanations on history of interaction, communication and integration among different ethnic groups. He also inspected the construction site and project departments of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, including the Seje Mountain Tunnel, Laya Tunnel and Potui Zangbu Bridge, to evaluate progress of the project. He inspected the construction progress of Pamo Highway renovation, construction of national highway 219, and other construction works in Metok county. In Mainling, Lobsang Gyaltzen inspected Dongshung mountain at night, and inquired about industrial development work in Bangzhong village, met frontline officers and soldiers, and expressed “deep respect for the soldiers who dedicated their youth and passion for border defense.” Lobsang Gyaltzen, emphasised the need to accelerate the development of border areas, adapt develop industries that benefit the people to local conditions, continuously improve production and living conditions, and persistently work to develop and enrich the border areas.

Ren Wei, a member of the Standing Committee of the TAR Party Committee and Executive Vice Chairman of TAR People's Government accompanied Lobsang Gyaltzen during the inspection.

SHIGATSE NEWS

Shigatse Municipal Party Committee Reviews Grassroots Party Building Work

January 08, 2024

The accountability and evaluation meeting on grassroots party-building work by the secretaries of party committees of Shigatse Municipal units was held to review grassroots party-building for 2023. The meeting summarized experiences, identified shortcomings, and arranged for the deployment of the next steps. Mu Xingbin, Secretary of the Shigatse Municipal Party Committee presided over the meeting and delivered a speech. He emphasized the need to adhere to political construction as the overarching principle, effectively use Xi Jinping's Thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era to "equip the mind, set the direction for the party building of organs, persist in focusing on enhancing organizational capacity, deepen the efforts from both ends and the middle, and consolidate the grassroots party organization building." He underlined the critical role of implementing responsibilities, playing a leading role as an example, and activating a "new engine" for improving the quality and effectiveness of party building work in Shigatse.

At the meeting, the Municipal Committee Office, the Municipal Propaganda Department, the Municipal Development and Reform Commission, the Economic and Information Bureau, the Women's Federation, and other units made on-site job presentations, with the concerned officials of the Municipal Party Committee's Organization Department providing comments.

Mayor of Shigatse Municipal Party Committee inspects construction work at Shigatse International Port

January 15, 2024

On January 15, Wang Fanghong, Deputy Secretary of the Shigatse Municipal Party Committee and Mayor, conducted a supervision and investigation of the construction-related activities at the Shigatse International Land Port. Vice Mayor Yu Bin and Liao Hanzhong took part in the

inspections. During the visit, Wang Fanghong inspected various locations including the Shigatse West Railway Station (freight station), export cargo inspection site, Everest agricultural product distribution and logistics distribution center, Delta Medical Co., Ltd., Cuoruixi Medical Technology Co., Ltd., Zhuoyang Energy Group, and Sunrise Oriental Clean Energy Co., Ltd., Tibet Kaitou Energy Storage Technology Co., Ltd., among others. The purpose of the inspection was reportedly to gather information about the planning and construction of railway dedicated lines, freight yards, related industry development, and the Shigatse International Land Port. Additionally, an on-site office meeting was held to address and resolve existing challenges with relevant departments and to plan the subsequent steps of deployment.

‘Highlights Of TAR PPCC Work Report’

Work Report of the Standing Committee of the 12th TAR People’s Political Consultative Conference (PPCC)

Presented by Meng Xiaolin, Vice Chairman of TAR PPCC, at the second session of the TAR PPCC held in Lhasa on January 6, 2024

On behalf of the Head of the 12th TAR PPCC and Vice Chairman of the CCP Central Committee’s Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Phakpa Lha Gelek Namgyal, Meng Xiaolin, Vice Chairman of TAR PPCC presented the work report of the Standing Committee of the 12th TAR PPCC during its second session. Some of the main points from the work report on the following specific aspects are as follow:

- **On Core Principles and Achievements**

The TAR PPCC in its work report said they focussed on the core principles of the party in 2023, also stated that major advancements have been made in critical domains such as the ‘Four Major Events’, and “Four Creations” through “special discussions and political committee meetings.” It further added that beyond conventional methods of “consultations”, the TAR PPCC had broadened the spectrum of engaging on issues such as "optimizing the tax business environment" and launching “High-quality Development of the Plateau Economy-Consultation Forum," with a focus on invigorating the general aviation industry. The work report claimed to have made a wealth of valuable strategies and insights in the aviation industry. It also stated

that rigorous research and consultations were conducted in 2023, to address “pressing issues in employment, education, healthcare, housing, and pensions”, through political meetings, counterpart consultations, and legislative symposiums that tackled these livelihood concerns. It added, that more than 30 pertinent issues were collected and reflected upon, that steered policies for tangible progress.

The Work Report added that the TAR PPCC had held the second general meeting of the Theoretical Research Association of the Tibet Committee of the TAR PPCC and its first Council, strengthened exchanges and contacts, and cooperation with the CCP CPPCC, and sister provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) to evaluate and examine 21 batches of investigations in Tibet.

- **Special Inspections:**

The Work Report further added; that targeted inspections were undertaken, encompassing critical subjects such as the ecological impact of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, the implementation of the "double reduction" policy for improved teaching quality, the consolidation of border areas, and the development of well-off villages. It said the approach helped “uncover and address critical challenges and issues.”

- **Measures on Social Governance:**

To enhance work styles, the TAR PPCC said it had revised measures for implementing the CCP Central Committee’s eight provisions and formulated new systems to guide grassroots work. Some measures reportedly included; enhancing the role of religious representatives in propagating the ‘Three Consciousness’ propaganda campaign, special consultation meetings were held to discuss Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, and promotion of red culture.

- **On Capability Buiding and Training of Party Cadres:**

The Work Report stated prioritizing political acumen and responsibility, training courses were conducted for committee members, grassroots cadres and officials,

- **On Special Focus on Borders**

The report said a special focus was placed on border security, smart border defense, and the enhancement of living conditions in agricultural and pastoral areas. Over 30 critical issues related to people's livelihoods in the borders were collected and provided feedback for policy implementation, stated the report.

- **Consolidation of Ideological Foundations and Xi Jinping's Thoughts**

The report said the TAR PCC's commitment to consolidate ideological foundations and deepen Xi Jinping's Thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a new era, was unflinching in 2023. Extensive study sessions, thematic education, and the creation of a multi-level reading matrix for committee members and party cadres were conducted to strengthen their ideological foundations and understanding of Xi Jinping's Thoughts.

- **Focus Areas for 2024**

The TAR PPCC reiterated its commitment to support the Party's overall leadership, deepen ideological education and propaganda campaigns, propagate 'Four Creations', and fortify "consultative democracy." The report also said the TAR PPCC will persist in its dedication under the "core leadership of Xi Jinping", work and align with Xi Jinping's Thought, and navigate challenges and issues through "innovative methods and strategies."

Highlight Of The TAR People's Government Work Report 2023 And Plans For 2024

The Work Report of the TAR People's Government was presented on the morning of January 7, during the Second Session of the 12th TAR People's Congress, the overall social situation remained stable and harmonious in 2023 in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).

The work report stated that the TAR will resolutely safeguard national political security and continue to fight against "secession" and reported that there have been no major political, mass, or violent "terrorist cases in the entire region."

The Work Report further added; "that the four major projects and "six actions" have achieved remarkable results, with all seven prefectures (cities) transformed into demonstration cities for national unity and progress; and that the "Three Consciousnesses" (propaganda) education is deeply ingrained in the hearts of the people. Yan Jinhai also said that the TAR People's Government have optimized the stability maintenance command and dispatch system to

achieve "one network, one platform, and full coverage" in the entire region. Rigorous rectification actions, including those related to public security, transportation, fire protection, and safety production, have been carried out, he added.

On the economic aspect: the Work Report of the TAR People's Government stated that the GDP of the TAR increased by 9 per cent expected to surpass 230 billion yuan, per capita income is set to surpass 60,000 yuan, with per capita disposable income for urban and rural residents exceeding 50,000 yuan and 20,000 yuan, respectively, showing an increase of about 6.5% and 10%. Consumer prices and the urban survey unemployment rate are controlled by 3% and 5%, respectively while investments in fixed assets, total retail sales of consumer goods, and total import and export have increased by 30%, 22%, and 130%, respectively. The growth rates of these major economic indicators rank among the top in the country claimed the work report.

On the infrastructure development aspect: the work report stated that the momentum for development has steadily increased and that key projects like the Sichuan-Tibet Railway and G318 quality improvement have been orderly progressed, the second runways and international terminals of Purang Airport and Gongga Airport have completed and had become operational, and the Xianghe Water Conservancy Hub is completed and generating electricity. The upper reaches of the Driчу (Ch: Jinsha) River and the southeast of Tibet are now included in the (national) water scenery integration demonstration base, the report added. It further added that regional opening has expanded further, with 15 traditional border trade points approved for restoration. The ports of Kyirong, Purang, Dram (Ch: Zhangmu), and Lizi have fully realized the movement of passengers and goods.

On Characteristic Industries: The work report claimed TAR to have improved in quality and efficiency, establishing a long system of key industrial chains, the output of grain, vegetables, meat, eggs, and milk reached 1.08 million tons, 950,000 tons, and 930,000 tons, respectively and land grain has been harvested, and the first batch of new rice has entered the market.

It further added; that thirty new demonstration cooperatives for national farmers' cooperatives have been established. The "cookware revolution" initiative has sold 670,000 pieces of plateau cooking utensils in its first year. The installed power capacity has exceeded 7 million kilowatts, and outward power transmission has increased by 189%. The number of tourists and income has historically exceeded 55 million and 65 billion yuan. The navigation industry started from

a high point, and Tibetan medicine, border trade logistics, and other industries continue to develop. The added value of industry and the digital economy is expected to increase by more than 10% and 15%, respectively, the work report further stated.

The work report also claimed that urban and rural areas in the TAR are more coordinated, focusing on high-quality preparation of three-level land and space planning for districts, cities, and counties and affordable housing projects (21,900 sets/households) and the renovation of 65 old communities have been implemented. It further stated that the urbanization rate of the resident population is expected to reach more than 38 per cent and the separation (denomadization) of 77,000 households between people and animals was completed. Furthermore, it added that 1,308 villages (residences) have a new appearance, and the new look of farmers and herdsmen has been fully affirmed by the National Rural Revitalization Bureau.

The business environment in the TAR has been apparently optimized, with the "*Project No. 1: A double recruitment and double introduction*" brand being "built to assist Tibet", with investment funds in place exceeding 50 billion yuan, the work report stated. The report also stated that the TAR People's Government made "unprecedented efforts" to reduce oil prices and electricity which has narrowed the difference in the price of refined oil products in Chamdo (Ch:Changdu) Ngari (Ch:Ali) and Lhasa. The comprehensive electricity costs for residents' industry and commerce in the TAR have reportedly been reduced by 13% and 14%, respectively and electricity price in border townships has been halved, while the electricity price for the characteristic industry catalogue of the plateau has been reduced by up to 64%, with an expected annual cost reduction of 5 billion yuan, according to the work report.

As part of the Ecological Civilization: the TAR claims to have completed 1.2 million mu of forest construction, including 240,000 mu of greening in the north and south of Lhasa. It further added; a total of 6.14 million mu of degraded grasslands have been repaired and managed while a background survey of glacier (ice and snow) and ice lake resources has been completed. A comprehensive clean-up and rectification of mining rights have been carried out, recovering 217 mining rights free of charge in accordance with the law, the report added.

In short, the main highlights are as follow:

Main highlights in bullet points:

Overall Social Situation

- Strong commitment to national political security and anti-secession efforts
- No major political, mass, or violent terrorist incidents reported
- Success in key projects and initiatives promoting national unity
- Effective education on the “three consciousnesses” propaganda campaign

Economic Operation:

- GDP expected to exceed 230 billion yuan, with a 9% increase
- Per capita income growth, exceeding 60,000 yuan
- Urban and rural disposable incomes increased by 6.5% and 10%, respectively
- Controlled inflation and unemployment rates
- Significant growth in investment, retail sales, and import/export
- Regional economic indicators rank among the top in the country

Development Momentum:

- Focused on implementing key projects such as Sichuan-Tibet Railway and G318 quality improvement
- Completion and operation of Purang and Gongga Airport expansions
- Inclusion of Drichu (Ch:Jinsha) River and southeast Tibet in the national water scenery integration
- Introduction of policies to boost consumption and enhance regional opening
- Approval for restoration of 15 traditional border trade points

Characteristic Industries:

- Improved quality and efficiency in industries
- Success in establishing key industrial chain systems
- Significant outputs in agriculture, industry, and digital economy
- Promising developments in tourism, Tibetan medicine, and border trade logistics
- Expected increase in the added value of industry and digital economy

Urban and Rural Coordination:

- High-quality land and space planning for districts, cities, and counties
- Implementation of affordable housing projects and community renovations
- Anticipation of an urbanization rate exceeding 38%

- Comprehensive initiatives for rural development and poverty alleviation
- Strengthened monitoring and assistance leading to increased income for poverty-stricken households

Optimized Business Environment:

- Successful establishment of a "double recruitment and double introduction" brand
- Reduction of administrative examination and approval matters by nearly half
- Reformed and optimized inspection mode for road checkpoints
- Tax reductions, fee reductions, and tax refund deferred fees totaling 4.62 billion yuan
- Clearing accounts owed to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) amounting to 4.6 billion yuan

Ecological Civilization:

- Completion of 1.2 million mu of forest construction and 6.14 million mu of grassland restoration
- Background survey of glacier and ice lake resources completed
- Comprehensive clean-up and rectification of mining rights
- Strengthened ecological and environmental protection efforts
- Successful international green certificate and carbon sink transactions
- High-quality air and water standards achieved, with the addition of four new demonstration zones for ecological civilization

Border and International Relations:

- Establishment of cities in Milin and Tsona from counties
- Accelerated construction of the urban center of Xingbianfu Action Center
- Promotion of smart border defense
- High percentages of hardened roads and electricity coverage in border villages
- Steady growth in the border population and increased income for border residents

International Engagement:

- Successful hosting of the 5th Tibet Expo, the 3rd "Himalayas" Forum, and other "significant events"
- Release of the white paper "Practice of the Party's Strategy of governing Tibet and Its Historical Achievements in the New Era"

- Focus on coordinated development of national defense and economic construction
- Attention to national defense mobilization, dual support, co-construction, and service guarantee for veterans
- Introduction of 146 high-level talents, the highest in history

Party Leadership and Governance:

- Comprehensive strengthening of Party leadership
- Thorough implementation of Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era
- Efforts to improve work style, government system, and party governance
- Promotion of government under the rule of law
- Submission of bills to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress
- Handling of proposals from deputies and members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
- Clean-up and integration of offices outside the TAR, streamlining and abolishing 82 institutions at all levels

Yan Jinhai also presented the work plans for 2024 as follow:

The focus for the year 2024 is outlined in the following seven aspects:

1. Upholding unity and harmony, with a strong emphasis on national unity, progress, and social stability
2. Ensuring stable investment and consumption, with an emphasis on maintaining investment growth and unleashing consumption potential
3. Strengthening industries and exploring potential advantages, with a focus on supporting and educating enterprises and highlighting characteristic industries
4. Revitalizing cities and villages, paying attention to rural revitalization
5. Utilizing external forces for internal strength, emphasizing reform, opening up, and innovation
6. Improving people's livelihood, with a focus on employment, income, public services, and various projects benefiting the masses

7. Protecting the ecology and solidifying the border, with a focus on ecological safety and national security barriers

The report concludes with a call for unity around the Party Central Committee, adherence to Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, and a commitment to achieving dreams and contributing to the construction of a strong country and national rejuvenation.

DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE OF TAR

First meeting of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway Electrification Renovation Project convened

On January 15, 2024, the first special meeting of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway (Tibet Section) Electrification Renovation Project was convened in the presence of Lai Jiao, a member of the Standing Committee of the TAR Party Committee and Minister of the Organization Department. The objective was to assess the project's progress in 2023 and assign tasks for 2024. Lai Jiao emphasized the immense significance and responsibility associated with the execution of the electrification transformation project of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway (Tibet Section). He urged all responsible units to depart from the incremental mindset, maintain a sense of urgency, and diligently work towards promptly implementing this significant project to yield tangible outcomes at the earliest. Lai Jiao stressed the necessity of reinforcing project quality management, rigorously adhering to the safety production responsibility system, risk prevention and control measures across the decision-making, planning, approval, construction, and evaluation processes, and effectively establishing the Qinghai-Tibet Railway (Tibet Section) electrification transformation project as a "high-quality project," "safety assurance engineering," and "integrity engineering."

China calls massive lithium discovery in eastern Tibet a ‘major breakthrough’

January 20, 2024

China has announced the discovery of a massive lithium deposit in Yajiang county, Sichuan province, previously part of eastern Tibet's province of Kham. The reserve, estimated at about 1 million tonnes, is a significant find for China's new-energy sector, crucial for the production of lithium batteries. China is doubling efforts to explore domestic resources to

secure energy and resource security, amid global competition for core resources. The country currently refines around half of the world's lithium but heavily relies on the overseas market for the material. The new discovery could bolster China's position as a renewable battery center, leading to further investments in its electric vehicle battery sector. This find enhances China's dominance in the lithium supply chain and solidifies its global position in batteries and electric vehicles. Despite these developments, lithium projects are considered highly risky, with potential delays between resource discoveries and their commercial utilization.

EXILE TIBETAN NEWS

Outgoing Taiwan President says she's inspired by Dalai Lama's congratulatory message on her party's poll victory

January 17, 2024

Taiwan's outgoing President Tsai Ing-wen expressed gratitude to Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, for his congratulatory message following her party's victory in the January 13 Taiwan election. The election resulted in her deputy Lai Ching-te being elected as the country's President, securing for the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party a third consecutive term. Despite China's implicit preference for a Beijing-friendly candidate, the election outcome saw Lai's victory with 40 per cent of the votes.

In his message, the Dalai Lama emphasized the importance of democracy and good relations between Taiwan and China, advocating for dialogue to resolve issues. He also expressed fond memories of Taiwan's hospitality and lauded the country's flourishing democracy, economic achievements, and preservation of traditional culture.

In a separate development, China reacted to the Philippines' President Ferdinand Marcos sending a note to congratulate Lai Ching-te on his electoral victory. Beijing summoned the Philippine Ambassador and warned Manila "not to play with fire" and expressed strong dissatisfaction with Marcos's remarks. The Philippines reaffirmed its One China Policy, explaining that Marcos's message was a way of recognizing mutual interests, including the presence of overseas Filipino workers in Taiwan. However, China perceives the message as a breach of political commitments and interference in its internal affairs and urged the Philippines to halt such actions.
